

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the existing title with the following amended title:

METHOD AND APPARATUS METHODS FOR COLLECTING AND PROCESSING BLOOD

Please replace paragraph [0002] with the following amended paragraph:

The present invention relates to ~~method and apparatus~~ methods for collecting and separating whole blood into one or more components.

Please replace paragraph [0007] with the following amended paragraph:

In accordance with the present invention, ~~method and apparatus~~ methods are provided for collecting and separating whole blood into one or more components with improved efficiency and reduced inconvenience. ~~The~~ According to one aspect, a method includes providing a disposable blood separation fluid circuit which is adapted to cooperate with a reusable separation controller or control module that is also suitable for other blood separation applications and processes. The fluid circuit includes a fluid flow path for communication with a blood source, such as a blood vessel of a human subject, donor or patient, and ~~an initial collection chamber~~ a first container in fluid communication with the flow path and a second container in fluid communication with the first container and the flow path.

Please replace paragraph [0008] with the following amended paragraph:

In accordance with the method of the present invention, the fluid flow path is connected to a blood source, such as a healthy human donor, although the method of the present invention is not limited to collecting and separating whole blood from humans in general or from healthy donors in particular. ~~A quantity~~ Quantities of whole blood ~~is collected~~

~~from the source into the initial collection chamber. are flowed into the containers.~~ The fluid circuit is then disconnected from the source. In the case of a healthy donor, the donor may then leave the blood collection site or center and the donor's presence and time are no longer required.

Please replace paragraph [0009] with the following amended paragraph:

~~The disposable fluid circuit is then mounted in association with a reusable controller, if not mounted on the controller at the time of collection. The~~ At least a portion of the quantity of whole blood collected in the initial collection first container is then centrifugally processed through the disposable fluid circuit assembly to separate it into the desired components for removal of at least a portion of one of the components from the first container. Centrifugal processing of at least a portion of the other quantity of whole blood is begun after the source is disconnected from the fluid circuit. ~~In accordance with this procedure, continuous connection of the source to the blood collection fluid circuit is not required throughout the processing, but is required for only the initial collection period during which whole blood is collected in the initial collection chamber. Also, it is not required to dedicate a controller to each donor or patient, and one controller may be used to process blood from many different sources.~~

Please replace paragraph [00010] with the following amended paragraph:

In accordance with other aspects of the present invention, a method includes providing a disposable blood separation fluid circuit which is adapted to cooperate with a reusable separation controller or control module that is also suitable for other blood separation applications and processes. The fluid circuit includes a fluid flow path for communication with a blood source and a container in fluid communication with the flow path. The flow path is connected to the source and quantities of whole blood are flowed from the source into the fluid circuit and the container. The source is then disconnected from the fluid circuit. At least a portion of the quantity of whole blood collected in the

container is centrifugally processed to separate it into the desired components for removal of at least a portion of one of the components from the container. Centrifugal processing of at least a portion of the quantity of whole blood in the fluid circuit is begun after the source is disconnected from the fluid circuit, the initial collection chamber preferably includes a quantity of anticoagulant to mix with the whole blood (or it may be metered into the blood as it is collected into the initial collection chamber) to inhibit the clotting or coagulation of the whole blood as it is subsequently processed through the fluid circuit assembly. The amount of blood collected in the initial collection chamber may be such amount as the user desires, consistent with the health of the donor or patient, but the quantity of whole blood collected is expected to be a typical "unit" of whole blood, as "unit" may be defined by the particular collecting agency or as defined by any applicable regulatory body, rule or guideline. It is expected that between about 200 to 750 ml of whole blood normally will be collected in the initial collection chamber, and more specifically about 405 to 550 ml and more specifically about 500 ml of whole blood. These ranges may differ in different countries or regions or with different blood collection agencies.

Please replace paragraph [00011] with the following amended paragraph:

In accordance with a further aspect of the present invention, a method includes providing a disposable blood separation fluid circuit which is adapted to cooperate with a reusable separation controller or control module that is also suitable for other blood separation applications and processes. The fluid circuit includes a fluid flow path for communication with a blood source, a container in fluid communication with the flow path, and a blood processing chamber in fluid communication with the container and the flow path. The flow path is connected to the source and quantities of whole blood are flowed from the source into the blood processing chamber and the container. The source is then disconnected from the fluid circuit. At least a portion of the quantity of whole blood collected in the blood processing chamber is centrifugally processed to separate it into the desired components for removal of at least a portion of one of the

components from the blood processing chamber. Centrifugal processing of at least a portion of the other quantity of whole blood is begun after the source is disconnected from the fluid circuit. ~~the reusable controller or reusable device is not required to be in the immediate vicinity of the human during the collecting or blood processing, and may even be in a completely different location than where the collecting takes place.~~

Please replace paragraph [00016] with the following amended paragraph:

The present invention is described herein in the context of the Baxter Fenwal Alyx® Blood Collection and Separation System. The present invention is not, however, limited to a particular system or to a system made by a particular manufacturer. It may be employed in connection with or using other blood collection and separation systems now available or that may yet be developed and used for a variety of blood processing procedures.

Please replace paragraph [00032] with the following amended paragraph:

Although described in terms of the Alyx® Blood Collection System marketed by Baxter Healthcare Corporation, Fenwal, Inc., the present invention may find application, as noted above, in other blood collection systems and devices without departing from the present invention, which is defined in the attached claims.